

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Status of Claims:

Claims 11 is currently being cancelled.

Claims 9, 10, 13-15 and 27 are currently being amended.

No claims are currently being added.

This amendment amends and cancels claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After canceling and amending the claims as set forth above, claims 9, 10, 13-15 and 27 are now pending in this application.

Objection to the Specification:

In the Office Action, the specification was objected to because “the Brief Summary of the Invention” is not a general statement of the invention . . . and as such does not specifically disclose quickly and readily apprise the public as to what the invention entails . . .” Applicants respectfully disagree, since the many objects described on pages 12-15 of the specification do provide such a quick and readily appraisable description. However, in the interest of expediting prosecution of this application, the Brief Summary of the Invention section has been amended to add a paragraph from page 99 of the specification. Accordingly, no new matter has been added.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 101:

In the Office Action, claims 9-11, 13-15 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed neither to a process nor a machine. By way of this amendment and reply, claim 9 has been amended, and many of the dependent claims have been amended, to clearly correspond to process (or method) claims.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph:

In the Office Action, claims 9-11, 13-15 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite, because “claim 9 claims both an apparatus and the

method steps of using the apparatus.” By way of this amendment and reply, claim 9 has been amended to clearly correspond to a process (or method) claim.

Prior Art Rejection of Claim 9:

In the Office Action, claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,198,906 to Boetje et al. Claim 9 has been amended to include the features of dependent claim 11, now canceled, whereby claim 11 was not rejected over any art of record. Accordingly, presently pending claim 9, as well as the other presently pending claims that depend from claim 9, are now in allowable form.

Conclusion:

Since all of the issues raised in the Office Action have been addressed in this Amendment and Reply, Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorize payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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